



**Congress of the United States**  
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March 13, 2014

Lt. Gen. Michelle D. Johnson  
Superintendent  
U.S. Air Force Academy  
Colorado Springs, CO

Dear Lieutenant General Johnson,

I am deeply concerned and outraged by recent news reports indicating that an Air Force Cadet was forced to remove a Bible verse from the whiteboard posted outside his room. I was further troubled to learn that the apparent reason the Cadet in question had to remove this verse was due to the fact that he is in a position of leadership. This suggests that a Cadet in a leadership role may have less religious freedom than Cadets in the rank and file.

Religious liberty is a foundational component of America's greatness, and was rightfully promised by the Constitution to all our nation's citizens, including those who dedicate their lives to our nation's defense. This truth should apply throughout all ranks, and those who pursue leadership positions should not be forced to sacrifice their religious freedom in order to lead.

Religious freedom and religious tolerance go hand in hand. Censoring Bible verses or any religious text for that matter, from personal or even common areas at the Air Force Academy suggests an apparent anti-religion bias rather than a rational approach that supports tolerance of all faiths. We are asking future officers to perhaps give even their very lives to protect and defend the Constitution and yet denying them rights from that same Constitution.

While initial reporting has indicated that the Cadet in question is facing no punishment, aside from being forced to remove the Bible verse, I would appreciate a full accounting of this incident. It may be that the officer who censored the Cadet should be the one who should be punished. I would also like an explanation of the apparent distinction drawn between those in leadership and other Cadets regarding religious freedom. I would also appreciate an explanation of the apparent influence the Military Religious Freedom Foundation has at the Air Force Academy in legal and media issues relating to decisions on Cadets' religious practices over the past 5 years. The MRFF is an organization that seems to detest religious expression of any faith, and has become so outlandish in its claims that it should simply be ignored.

The brave men and women serving to protect the Constitutional rights of all Americans should not have their own Constitutional rights stifled as they carry out that task. I urge you to

Letter to Lt. Gen. Johnson  
March 13, 2014

reconsider your decision to censor this Cadet's religious beliefs, and to set the record straight on where the Air Force stands with regard to the religious liberty of all Cadets.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Lamborn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Doug Lamborn  
Member of Congress